

CASE STUDY

Federal Government



Secure Wireless Keeps Warehouse and Point-of-Sale Networks Online

DoD Provides Model for Wireless Commercial Grocery Chains and Retail Stores

The U.S. Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) operates approximately 300 locations including retail stores and distribution centers providing groceries and household goods to active and retired military personnel and their families. Running this \$5 billion-per-year worldwide operation efficiently and effectively means taking advantage of the latest technology, including wireless networks. Much like any large, progressive grocery or retailer, DeCA has been using wireless technology since 1996. For applications where running cables is just not practical, such as outdoor points-of-sale, deli counters and storerooms, DeCA uses wireless registers. Wireless barcode readers are used in distribution centers and warehouses to provide real-time inventory updates for tracking and ordering.

As part of the federal government, DeCA networks are mandated to be secure. DeCA's challenge was finding a security solution that works with a broad range of third-party products and protects both legacy and future investments in wireless technology. DeCA needed to support their current infrastructure and could not spend the time or money for a network redesign. They needed a solution that was transparent to the wireless users. They required a solution that would secure the wireless communications of their resource-constrained DOS-based barcode scanners.

Flexible and Proven Wireless Security

DeCA chose Fortress to protect its wireless network. Despite having almost 300 locations, installation was trouble-free with Fortress Wireless Security Gateways installed behind the access points to create a secure bridge to the wired network.

Fortress was the first wireless security solution to meet the rigorous requirements established by the National Institute of Standards and Technology, being validated

under Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS 140).

The wireless networks at DeCA are used to create outdoor and deli counter points-of-sale with their NCR electronic cash registers. DeCA uses handheld devices for remote price checks and inventory control. The devices used at DeCA include Psion Teklogix 7035 handheld computers with built-in barcode scanners, as well as 8255 and 8260 vehicle-mounted computers in its warehouses, storage areas and on the sales floor for inventory control.

Current and Future Benefits

Because DeCA chose Fortress to protect its wireless network, they did not have to shut down a mission-critical network. Now DeCA can efficiently maintain inventory and coordinate logistics for a broad range of general retail and industrial applications.

The Fortress solution protects both legacy and future investments in wireless technology. With Fortress, DeCA now has a solution that is transparent to the wireless users and that can support their current infrastructure without requiring a network redesign. Even the wireless communications of their resource-constrained DOS-based barcode scanners are protected.

The future looks promising. As retail operations explore self-checkout options or shopping carts with integrated wireless devices, secure wireless networks will be integral components of these solutions. With Fortress' proven capabilities, supply-chain, warehousing and retail organizations can have the flexibility and efficiency wireless networking provides, without sacrificing best-of-breed security.

Challenges

- Provide strong security for supply chain, warehouse and point-of-sale operations
- Accommodate a mixed multi-vendor environment
- Secure both legacy DOS devices and newer platforms
- Meet requirements for FIPS validation
- Provide transparent operation for users

Solutions

- Commercially available wireless access points
- Mix of barcode scanners, point-of-sale terminals and mobile computers
- Fortress Security Gateways
- Fortress Management and Policy Server
- Fortress Secure Clients for DOS and Windows

Results

- Fortress's overlay security model integrates with all existing technologies and equipment
- FIPS validated security in place for wireless network
- All applications are supported
- Transparent operation for users
- High volume warehouse and retail operation stays in service



For more information about the Fortress product suite for Federal Government:

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